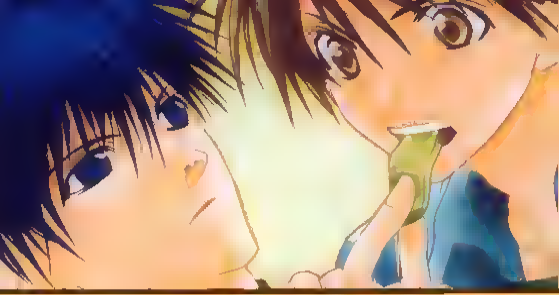

chapter 2

Lover's Phantom

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怜樹の呼び声

れいじゅ

Reiju's Calling Voice

End

後編

NO ...JUST EXACTLY WHAT ARE YOU PEOPLE ..!?
WHAT ARE WE?
IN TERMS OF EXISTENCE, EVEN IF I TOLD YOU THE MEANING THE ANSWER WOULD BE THE SAME THAT "WE ARE NOT THE SAME AS HUMANS."
I SHALL NOW TELL YOU OUR LEGEND
PLEASE LISTEN AS IF IT WERE A FAIRYTALE

ONCE UPON A TIME, LONG AGO...
IN A LAND OF YEARS PAST, THERE LIVED A LARGE TREE.
BEFORE LONG, IT REPRODUCED... AND AROUND THAT TIME, PEOPLE BEGAN LIVING NEARBY.
THE PEOPLE CALLED HER KASHIKOIKI AND PRAISED HER FOR RESEMBLING THE GODS
IN RETURN, THE LIVES OF THE PEOPLE SHE PROTECTED
SOON BECAME OF INTEREST TO HER.
THUS
SHE BEGAN FILLING WITH BUDS OF CURIOSITY, AND BEFORE SHE KNEW IT, SHE CREATED A LIFE OF HER OWN.

Kashikoiki ...wise tree. In the tradition of Shinto, all facets of nature are considered to contain the spirit of a god, and huge old trees are no exception. They are usually wrapped with a special rope and paper to symbolize the presence of a god.

"KASHIKOIKI."
IT HAS BEEN CALLED OUR ANCESTOR OF SORTS.
THUS, THE BIRTH OF OUR KIND.
AND THAT IS ABOUT ALL WE KNOW.
IT REALLY IS... JUST A FAIRY TALE.
BUT, JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE BORN THAT WAY, WHY CAN'T YOU BECOME ADULTS...?
THIS IS ALL CONJECTURE, BUT...
IT SEEMS KASHIKOIKI'S NAME IS JUST THAT. "WISE TREE."
HUH?
DOESN'T ONE UNCONSCIOUSLY WANT TO RETURN TO THE PLACE OF THEIR BIRTH?
WHEN WE BECOME ADULTS, OUR REMAINING BLOOD IS CALLED BY HER.
THEY ARE CALLED "FEELINGS OF GUILT"
LIKE "YOU MUST RETURN... TO YOUR ORIGINS."

OH I'M SORRY!
HEH HEH. THAT'S VERY TRUE
HE DOESN'T LISTEN TO WHAT PEOPLE SAY ANYWAY...
BUT... IF IT'S ISANA, HE'LL DO JUST FINE!
YES... I DON'T QUITE RECALL IT COMPLETELY, BUT I HEARD IT.
DID YOU... HEAR IT, TOO?
EVEN NOW, I HAVE YET TO SEE ANYONE SURVIVE WITHOUT A PHYSICAL BODY.
SINCE WE HAVE VERY STRONG, TREE-LIKE QUALITIES FROM CHILDHOOD, OUR BODIES AND EMOTIONS ARE SEVERELY UNDERDEVELOPED.
I THINK IT IS TOO DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO UNDERSTAND
IF I WASN'T SO LUCKY, I WOULDN'T HAVE WANTED TO LIVE
EVEN A STRONG, UNBREAKABLE PERSON WITHOUT A WILL, THE BODY IS SEDUCED.
IN THAT CASE, A MATERNAL VOICE CALLS US INTO A SOOTHING DREAM
I NEVER KNEW WHAT HE WAS THINKING AT ALL. HE ALWAYS HAD A BLANK EXPRESSION...
SPEAKING OF WHICH, WITH ISANA

ORIGINAL...?
OH NO, WE ONLY RETURN TO OUR ORIGINAL FORM.
THAT...THAT DOESN'T MEAN HE'LL DIE...?
MORE PRECISELY... SEEDS.
YOU DON'T MEAN LIKE TURNING INTO TREES...
SEEDS LIKE SUNFLOWERS OR PUMPKIN
EVEN SPROUTS IF HE BECOMES SOMETHING LIKE THAT
STOMP
STOMP
THAT THAT GUY ISN'T HUMAN

I DON'T BELIEVE IT
ISANA
HE EVEN SMILED IN THE END
Oh
HE USED THAT WEIRD POWER SO I COULDN'T MOVE
WAIT A SEC...
IF I REALLY THINK ABOUT IT HE DID SOME PRETTY BAD THINGS TO ME
BECAUSE OF THAT WHILE I COULDN'T FIGHT BACK, HE
BUT...BUT STILL...
JUST A SOFT-HEARTED IDIOT

I CAN'T JUST GIVE UP AND LEAVE LIKE THIS!
OH...? DID YOU FORGET SOME-THING?
I BELIEVE WE HAVE ACCOUNTED FOR EVERY EXPENSE.
Koo
Koo
Koo
ITS NOT THAT
THAT GUY..
ISANA, WHERE IS HE?!

YOU MUST BE WORRIED ABOUT HIM—THAT BOY...
IT SEEMS I WAS RIGHT ABOUT YOU
IF IT IS YOU, SURELY...
I'M...I'M NOT WORRIED...I JUST HAD TO TELL HIM SOMETHING...
CLENCH
TELL HIM SOME-THING?
AH, UM... WELL...
PLEASE TELL ISANA YOURSELF—
IF YOUR VOICE IS STRONGER THAN KASHIKOIKI'S—THEN YOU MIGHT BECOME ISANA'S STRENGTH...
AS MANY TIMES AS IT TAKES PLEASE CALL OUT TO HIM

ISANA!!
HE IS .. WAITING IN THE FIRST ROOM ON THE THIRD FLOOR..
WHOA...!?
WHAT THE... REAL TREES...
SO THIS IS THEIR ORIGINAL FORM?
It's as tall as the ceiling!
NO...NO WAY..
TWITCH
SO, THE ONES THAT DON'T MAKE IT BECOME... THIS...?
WHAT A SCARY THOUGHT!!
IMPOSSIBLE... HAHA...

ISANA!!
!
JUMP
ISANA...!
IF HE BECO A SEE
I WON'T BE ABLE TO TELL HIM
I MADE IT NOTHING'S HAPPENED YET
naa
HE'S BREATHING HE'S ALIVE!
HE SHOULD BE DEAD BUT
ISANA!
HEY.... ISANA!
Return....

haa...
HIS BODY IS FADING AWAY..!?
AH....
!!
.....!?
IDIOT!!
HO. HOLD ON!
I SAID HOLD ON, ISANA!!
HURRY UP AND OPEN YOUR EYES!!
YOU! DON'T FORGET WHAT YOU DID AS A HUMAN!
YOU BASTARD! PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER! I WON'T FORGIVE YOU IF YOU BECOME A SEED!

ISANA!!
DON'T DISAPPEAR IN FRONT OF ME WITHOUT SAYING A DAMN THING!!
KENSUKE...
WHY... ARE YOU HERE...?
DON'T SCREW AROUND, YOU!
YOU'LL BECOME A SEED IF YOU STAY LIKE THIS.
SO SLEEPY JUST LET ME SLEEP...
YOU RE-MEMBER WHAT YOU DID TO ME!?
SO YOU BETTER WAKE UP RIGHT NOW AND BOW DOWN AND BEG FOR FORGIVE-NESS!
YOU ...?
IDIOT! DON'T DO IT!

AS A HUMAN, YOU'RE A DAMN BASTARD.
WHY...ARE YOU USING PAST TENSE?!
THAT'S RIGHT...IN THE TIME I SPENT WITH YOU...
YOU TAUGHT ME THE MEANING OF LIVING....
I'M NOT SOMEONE YOU CAN JUST DO ONCE AND THROW AWAY!
WHAT AM I SAYING?
KENSUKE
TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR TOUCHING ME....
DON'T CRY... KENSUKE....
YOU BASTARD....

NOW.... I UNDERSTAND...
THE PROBLEM WASN'T ABOUT GOOD OR BAD ENERGY..
Today's food is totally different
YOU SHOWED ME THINGS I NEVER KNEW.
It's important to be grateful to people y'know
ISANA!
YOU CRIED, LAUGHED, AND GOT ANGRY FOR MY SAKE.
I THINK I WANT TO SEE THAT FOREVER...
FOR-EVER ....
AND EVER...

SHAKE
glow...
glow...
UH...
MM...
ISANA ?
!
GRAB

ISANA... REALLY...?
NO MORE... OF ALL THAT...?
THANK GOOD-NESS!
RELIEF
IT SEEMS... I'VE ESCAPED TRANSFORMING INTO A SEED...
YEAH...
THANK GOODNESS...

HEY, YOU, DON'T CRY! YOU'LL KILL THE MOOD.
...WHAT'S WRONG, KENSUKE...?
BADUMP
CRY...?
!!
AH TEARS...
IS IT MY IMAGINATION OR HAS HIS EXPRESSION GOTTEN SOFTER?
WELL... IT MIGHT BE BECAUSE HE'S STILL YOUNG AND INNOCENT...
.....
SO THESE ARE CALLED "TEARS"

BUT...
"I'M GLAD"
"THANK YOU"
"SORRY"
THERE ARE SO MANY SAYINGS
I LOVE YOU, KENSUKE.
STAY WITH ME ALWAYS.
BUT YOU CAME TO MY RESCUE AND CRIED FOR ME
SO, IS THAT STILL HATE?
Uh...
shake shake
H-H-HEY YOU,
YOU'RE A PAIN TO LOOK AFTER. YOU'RE SELFISH. YOU ACT WEIRD, AND YOU HAVE NO COMMON SENSE.
I... HATE IT..

OH CRAP
SHIVER
BUT!
FORGET IT... IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO FIGHT YOU
YOU'LL JUST END UP USING YOUR POWERS.
RATHER THAN CONTROLLING, AT LEAST LET ME DECIDE MY OWN ACTIONS.
SINCE I'VE BEEN LIVING BY MY OWN WILL TILL NOW...
SO....

WHEN HE SAID "LOVE"...
I FELT "HAPPY"
HO ... HOW COULD YOU NOT HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD BUT KNOW HOW TO DO THIS?
Still resistant
HMM...?
WE DID IT YESTERDAY, BUT I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER MUCH
DEFINITELY BECAUSE I WAS BEING CONTROLLED
AND THEN TO SUDDENLY END UP LIKE THIS ...

GRAB
YOU LOOK FORWARD TO THE FUTURE RIGHT? KENSUKE...
HU... AH...
WHA... WHAT THE~? JUST NOW, HE WAS TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM BEFORE...
THUD
INSTINCT.
AHH...
AH...
THEN, SHOULDN'T WE LIVE TO SATISFY EACH OTHER?
THRUST
THRUST
IT FEELS LIKE HE'S REALLY BECOME A MAN...
NNN...
twitch
PROBABLY BECAUSE I'VE BECOME... AN ADULT.
SO THEN... UH...AH
I'M GONNA REGRET THIS...
haa haa
SEEMS... LIKE YOU'VE REALLY... CHANGED...

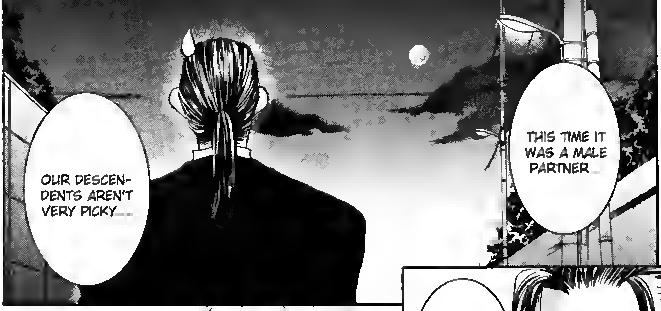
THIS TIME, I WANT TO SEE YOUR FACE WHILE WE DO IT.
WHA...
WHAT KIND OF EMBARRASSING STUFF ARE YOU SPOUTING?!
IT'S DIFFERENT FROM BEFORE. I REALLY WANT TO WATCH YOU.
IDIOT... AHH...
SHIVER
AH...
NN...
RUB
RUB
TWIST
HEH. I WON'T USE ANY OF MY POWERS ON MY BELOVED KENSUKE...
SHIVER
SHIVER
~~!!
SHOCK
DON'T SAY SOMETHING SO SELFISH...
HAH...
AH...
squish
push

UN...
THRUST
ISANA—
THIS REALLY HURTS
NO—
PUSH
PUSH
N..
O..
PUSH
I..
KEN.....
THRUST
THRUST
SU...
KE....
THRUST
ISANA!
SANA.
THRUST

pant
KENSUKE
ARE YOU... OK?
HOW COULD I BE OK LIKE THIS?!
HIS CONCERN IS STARTING TO MAKE HIM SOUND MORE LIKE AN ADULT

WAS IT BAD?
YOU DON'T WANT TO DO IT WITH ME ANYMORE?
Lean
I DID A BETTER JOB THIS TIME. I REALLY TRIED MY BEST.
Not so much an adult.
RATHER THAN JUST MYSELF, I MADE YOU FEEL GOOD, TOO..
...more like a hyper kid...?
?
THERE'S NO HELP FOR IT.
I GUESS I'LL STICK WITH YOU FOR NOW.
WELL, BEST TO LOOK AHEAD.

THERE WAS NO OTHER WAY BOTH IN ORDER FOR HIM TO MATURE,
THIS TIME, IT WAS THE WORKER WHO BORE THE BURDEN OF STOPPING IT.
MY MY OUR CHILDREN CERTAINLY HAVE VARIED TASTES
HOWEVER, EVEN WITH OUR DECREASING NUMBERS...
AND FOR THE SAKE OF THE FUTURE OF OUR KIND.
WELL THEN, THE NEXT CHILD IS...
AH.



AS LONG AS THEY ARE HAPPY.

The END

beautiful soup
how beautiful is your soup?
POSSIBLE SOUP NET | #POSSIBLE SOUP#IRONWAY NET